

professional men such as compose this Club must be vigilant to see that we maintain unchanged our form of Government which has proven its worth over a century and a half.

None of us need to be told how much of our normal freedom of action we have surrendered—willingly and gladly—to meet the demands of the present situation. Vast powers have been granted to administrators; vaster powers yet may be granted them, as necessary to combat successfully the menace which confronts us from abroad. Yet we must bear in mind that a short-term grant of power is easily converted into a grant with a more remote maturity; that, in the course of history, those who have parted with power often have not recovered it.

Essential war powers are being exercised and must be exercised to an extent unprecedented in our history. But if Victory results in drastic or essential changes in our constitutional Government, in the loss of the liberties essential to our way of life, it will be a Pyrrhic Victory, indeed, for we shall have lost what we fought to save. The responsibility is heavy upon all branches of our Government, upon all citizens of our Country, that this should not come to pass.

In such critical periods as those through which we now are passing, and at a time when we are exerting all our efforts to defeat the most critical assault ever made upon those principles which are embodied in our way of life and philosophy of Government, we are apt to be impatient with anything which seems to hinder the prosecution of those war efforts, even though it be the assertion of rights protected by our Constitution. We have a right to feel, undoubtedly, that even the basic Constitutional rights are qualified and not unlimited—that no one can expect to push them to the extent of endangering the existence of the very Government that protects them.

In addition to all the difficulties that beset our Nation from without, is added this latent danger that, in our eagerness to exert our fullest efforts to the destruction of our enemies, we may at the same time be laying the foundation for a definite change-about of our own way of life.

That there is no contradiction, real or implied, in such an attitude in times like these is clear enough, I believe, from Maryland's record in the war, and in pre-war days, under this Administration. If any single State in the Country can be said to have given the most complete and most prompt all-out assistance to the Federal Government in the war effort, it is Maryland. A full year and a half before war was forced upon us by the treachery of the Japanese at Pearl Harbor, Maryland was girding its loins for the conflict. No one hoped more strongly for Peace, yet, viewing the developments in Continental Europe, and watching the rising cloud of Japanese arrogance in the Far East, sound reasoning dictated caution and preparation. Fortunately, Maryland took heed.

As far back as the summer of 1940, the Maryland Council of Defense, parent body of all Civilian Defense activities in Maryland, was organized. One week later we joined with the then Attorney General of the United States, Robert H. Jackson, in calling the first joint Federal-State conference on war legislation.